

18 of the specification, which states, among other things, that “the input signal from the subtractor 122 in FIG. 4 of Embodiment 1 (two unidirectional microphones) is replaced by an input signal from the bidirectional microphone 300a.”

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

2. The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 1 and 9 as unpatentable over Hatae in view of Chu et al. (previously applied).

Chu et al. discloses four directional microphones, two along each of mutually orthogonal axes, along with mixing circuitry and control circuitry. The microphones are held each directed out from a center point. The mixing circuitry combines the electrical signals from the microphones in varying proportions to form a composite signal, the composite signal including contributions from at least two of the microphones. The control circuitry analyzes the electrical signals to determine an angular orientation of the acoustic signal relative to the central point, and substantially continuously adjusts the proportions in response to the determined orientation and provides the adjusted proportions to the mixing circuitry.

This is in contrast to the present invention, in which only three unidirectional microphones are arranged on orthogonal axes, as shown in FIG. 13 of the instant application.

Hatae is not combinable with Chu et al. because the processing necessary for the different number of unidirectional microphones in Hatae (3) and in Chu et al. (4) differs. It should be noted that one difference in processing between a bidirectional microphone and two unidirectional microphones oriented in opposite directions is that the bidirectional microphone

has only one output to be processed, while the two unidirectional microphones have two outputs to be processed.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

3. The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of claims 2-4 as unpatentable over Hatae in view of Chu et al. and further in view of Chang et al. (previously applied).

Chang et al. discloses an apparatus and method in a video conference system providing accurate determination of the position of a speaking participant by measuring the difference in arrival times of a sound originating from the speaking participant, using as few as four microphones in a 3-dimensional configuration. In one embodiment, a set of simultaneous equations relating the position of the sound source and each microphone and relating to the distance of each microphone to each other are solved off-line and programmed into a host computer. In one embodiment, the set of simultaneous equations provide multiple solutions and the median of such solutions is picked as the final position. In another embodiment, an average of the multiple solutions are provided as the final position.

Chang et al., like the other cited references, fails to teach, mention or suggest the arrangement of the microphones as recited in claim 1, from which claims 2-4 depend.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

4. The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of claims 6-8 as unpatentable over Hatae in view of Chang et al.

As noted above, Chang et al. fails to teach, mention or suggest the arrangement and the number of microphones recited in claim 5, from which claims 6-8 depend.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned remarks, claims 1-10 are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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